

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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ARA:VPVAKY (TEXT)
HA/HR:MBOVA (TEXT)
PA/PRS:KBROWN (INFO)

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TO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, SOPN, PA

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE : LAINO CASE

REF: STATE 183946

1. FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT PRESS
BRIEFING YESTERDAY. QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT WERE NOT
RAISED.

Q. CAN YOU GIVE US YOUR LATEST INFORMATION ON THE PARA-
GUAYAN OPPOSITION LEADER WHO WAS ARRESTED AND DETAINED ON
HIS RETURN TO PARAGUAY FROM THE UNITED STATES?

A: MR. LAINO IS STILL UNDER DETENTION. ON JULY 14 HE
WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE NATIONAL PENITENTIARY AT TACUMBU,
WHERE VISITS FROM FAMILY AND OTHER PERSONS ARE PERMITTED.
ON THE SAME DAY HE WAS EXAMINED BY A PANEL OF FIVE DOCTORS

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INCLUDING ONE NAMED BY HIS FAMILY. MRS. LAINO HAS VISITED
HER HUSBAND AT TACUMBU SEVERAL TIMES SINCE HIS TRANSFER.
PARAGUAYAN AUTHORITIES HAVE INDICATED THAT MR. LAINO
WILL BE PROSECUTED FOR ALLEGED TIES WITH THE EXTREME
LEFT IN PARAGUAY AND ABROAD. WE UNDERSTAND THAT A LAWYER
HAS BEEN NAMED TO REPRESENT HIM.

WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN ABOUT THIS MATTER IN URGENT TERMS AND ARE MAINTAINING CLOSE CONTACT WITH PARAGUAYAN OFFICIALS. WE CONTINUE TO BE DEEPLY CONCERNED AND TO HOPE FOR EARLY, FULL RESOLUTION OF THE LAINO CASE.

Q: DO YOU HAVE A REPORT ON LAINO'S STATE OF HEALTH?

A: I'LL TAKE YOUR QUESTION.

Q. ISN'T IT TRUE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD STROESSNER TO DINNER AT THE WHITE HOUSE IN DECEMBER?

A: NO. THE PRESIDENT'S ONLY MEETING WITH THE PARAGUAYAN PRESIDENT WAS DURING THE PANAMA TREATIES SIGNING CEREMONIES IN SEPTEMBER OF LAST YEAR. AT THAT TIME STROESSNER PARTICIPATED IN A WHITE HOUSE DINNER FOR THE VISITING LATIN AMERICAN HEADS OF STATE.

2. FOLLOWING EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE AT PRESS BRIEFING:

Q: (ROBERTO GARCIA) TOM, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT THE TREATMENT THAT IS BEING ACCORDED TO MR. WHITE IN PARAGUAY LATELY?

A: NO, I HAVE NOTHING ON AMBASSADOR WHITE IN PARAGUAY.

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SPOKESMAN WAS ASKED QUESTION ON ANOTHER SUBJECT AND INDICATED HE HAD A BRIEF STATEMENT ON THE OTHER SUBJECT TO MAKE.

JUAN WALTE (UPI) RAISED THE FOLLOWING:

Q: TOM, BEFORE YOU DO THAT, COULD YOU TAKE THE WHITE QUESTION BECAUSE THERE HAVE BEEN SOME VERY SERIOUS CHARGES MADE AGAINST HIM IN PARAGUAY.

A. YES, I WILL TAKE THAT QUESTION.

; 3. GU,DANCE PROVIDED FOR QUESTION IN PARAGRAPH TWO FOLLOWS:

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THE TREATMENT BEING GIVEN AMBASSADOR WHITE IN PARAGUAY?

A: AS OUR STATEMENT HERE ON JULY 11 INDICATED, AMBASSADOR WHITE HAS BEEN ACTING UNDER DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTIONS IN MAKING REPRESENTATIONS FOR EARLY, FULL RESOLUTION OF THE LAINO CASE. THE INITIALLY STRIDENT REACTIONS OF SOME PARAGUAYAN GROUPS TO OUR AMBASSADOR'S REPRESENTATIONS

IN THIS MATTER APPEAR TO HAVE MODERATED. WE HOPE THAT
THE U.S. POSITION, WHICH HAD BEEN INCORRECTLY CHARACTERIZED

AS INTERFERENCE IN PARAGUAY'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS, IS NOW
MORE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD. VANCE

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